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CAMPING WITH PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

By JOHN BURROUGHS

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

THOMAS WAYNE NORRIS

ARRIVAL AT GARDINER, MONT.
(ENTRANCE TO YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK.)

CAMPING WITH PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

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CAMPING WITH PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

BY JOHN BURROUGHS

At the time I made the trip to Yellowstone Park with President Roosevelt in the spring of 1903, I promised some friends to write up my impressions of the President and of the Park, but I have been slow in getting around to it. The President himself, having the absolute leisure and peace of the White House, wrote his account of the trip nearly two years ago! But with the stress and strain of my life at "Slabsides," — administering the affairs of so many of the wild creatures of the woods about me, — I have not till this blessed season found the time to put on record an account of the most interesting thing I saw in that wonderful land, which, of course, was the President himself.

A STORM CENTRE

When I accepted his invitation I was well aware that during the journey I should be in a storm centre most of the time, which is not always a pleasant

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prospect to a man of my habits and disposition. The President himself is a good deal of a storm, — a man of such abounding energy and ceaseless activity that he sets everything in motion around him wherever he goes. But I knew he would be pretty well occupied on his way to the Park in speaking to eager throngs and in receiving personal and political homage in the towns and cities we were to pass through. But when all this was over, and I found myself with him in the wilderness of the Park, with only the superintendent and a few attendants to help take up his tremendous personal impact, how was it likely to fare with a non-strenuous person like myself, I asked? I had visions of snow six and seven feet deep where traveling could be done only upon snowshoes, and I had never had the things on my feet in my life. If the infernal fires beneath, that keep the pot boiling so out there, should melt the snows, I could see the party tearing along on horseback at a wolf-hunt pace over a rough country; and as I had not been on a horse's back since the President was born, how would it be likely to fare with me there?

THE PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN NATURAL HISTORY

I had known the President several years before he became famous, and we had had some correspondence on subjects of natural history. His interest in such themes is always very fresh and keen,

and the main motive of his visit to the Park at this time was to see and study in its semi-domesticated condition the great game which he had so often hunted during his ranch days; and he was kind enough to think it would be an additional pleasure to see it with a nature-lover like myself. For my own part, I knew nothing about big game, but I knew there was no man in the country with whom I should so like to see it as Roosevelt.

HIS LOVE OF ANIMALS

Some of our newspapers reported that the President intended to hunt in the Park. A woman in Vermont wrote me, to protest against the hunting, and hoped I would teach the President to love the animals as much as I did, — as if he did not love them much more, because his love is founded upon knowledge, and because they had been a part of his life. She did not know that I was then cherishing the secret hope that I might be allowed to shoot a cougar or bobcat; but this fun did not come to me. The President said, "I will not fire a gun in the Park; then I shall have no explanations to make." Yet once I did hear him say in the wilderness, "I feel as if I ought to keep the camp in meat. I always have." I regretted that he could not do so on this occasion.

I have never been disturbed by the President's hunting trips. It is to such men as he that the big

game legitimately belongs, — men who regard it from the point of view of the naturalist as well as from that of the sportsman, who are interested in its preservation, and who share with the world the delight they experience in the chase. Such a hunter as Roosevelt is as far removed from the game-butcher as day is from night; and as for his killing of the "varmints," — bears, cougars, and bobcats, — the fewer of these there are, the better for the useful and beautiful game.

The cougars, or mountain lions, in the Park certainly needed killing. The superintendent reported that he had seen where they had slain nineteen elk, and we saw where they had killed a deer, and dragged its body across the trail. Of course, the President would not now on his hunting trips shoot an elk or a deer except to "keep the camp in meat," and for this purpose it is as legitimate as to slay a sheep or a steer for the table at home.

We left Washington on April 1, and strung several of the larger Western cities on our thread of travel, — Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, St. Paul, Minneapolis, — as well as many lesser towns, in each of which the President made an address, sometimes brief, on a few occasions of an hour or more.

MEETING THE PEOPLE

He gave himself very freely and heartily to the people wherever he went. He could easily match

their Western cordiality and good-fellowship. Wherever his train stopped, crowds soon gathered, or had already gathered, to welcome him. His advent made a holiday in each town he visited. At all the principal stops the usual programme was: first, his reception by the committee of citizens appointed to receive him, — they usually boarded his private car, and were one by one introduced to him; then a drive through the town with a concourse of carriages; then to the hall or open air platform, where he spoke to the assembled throng; then to lunch or dinner; and then back to the train, and off for the next stop — a round of hand-shaking, carriage-driving, speech-making each day. He usually spoke from eight to ten times every twenty-four hours, sometimes for only a few minutes from the rear platform of his private car, at others for an hour or more in some large hall. In Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul, elaborate banquets were given him and his party, and on each occasion he delivered a carefully prepared speech upon questions that involved the policy of his administration. The throng that greeted him in the vast Auditorium in Chicago — that rose and waved and waved again — was one of the grandest human spectacles I ever witnessed.

In Milwaukee the dense cloud of tobacco smoke that presently filled the large hall after the feasting was over was enough to choke any speaker, but it

did not seem to choke the President, though he does not use tobacco in any form himself; nor was there anything foggy about his utterances on that occasion upon legislative control of the trusts.

A PRETTY INCIDENT

In St. Paul the city was inundated with humanity, — a vast human tide that left the middle of the streets bare as our line of carriages moved slowly along, but that rose up in solid walls of town and prairie humanity on the sidewalks and city dooryards. How hearty and happy the myriad faces looked! At one point I spied in the throng on the curbstone a large silk banner that bore my own name as the title of some society. I presently saw that it was borne by half a dozen anxious and expectant-looking schoolgirls with braids down their backs. As my carriage drew near them, they pressed their way through the throng, and threw a large bouquet of flowers into my lap. I think it would be hard to say who blushed the deeper, the girls or myself. It was the first time I had ever had flowers showered upon me in public; and then, maybe, I felt that on such an occasion I was only a minor side issue, and public recognition was not called for. But the incident pleased the President. "I saw that banner and those flowers," he said afterwards; "and I was delighted to see you honored that way." But I fear I have not to this day

THE PRESIDENT WITH MR. BURROUGHS AND SECRETARY LOEB
JUST BEFORE ENTERING THE PARK.

From stereograph, copyright 1906, by Underwood & Underwood, New York.

thanked the Monroe School of St. Paul for that pretty attention.

GRATIFYING THE CHILDREN

The time of the passing of the presidential train seemed well known, even on the Dakota prairies. At one point I remember a little brown schoolhouse stood not far off, and near the track the schoolma'am, with her flock, drawn up in line. We were at luncheon, but the President caught a glimpse ahead through the window, and quickly took in the situation. With napkin in hand, he rushed out on the platform and waved to them. "Those children," he said, as he came back, "wanted to see the President of the United States, and I could not disappoint them. They may never have another chance. What a deep impression such things make when we are young!"

COWBOY FRIENDS

At some point in the Dakotas we picked up the former foreman of his ranch, and another cowboy friend of the old days, and they rode with the President in his private car for several hours. He was as happy with them as a schoolboy ever was in meeting old chums. He beamed with delight all over. The life which those men represented, and of which he had himself once formed a part, meant so much to him; it had entered into the very marrow of his

being, and I could see the joy of it all shining in his face as he sat and lived parts of it over again with those men that day. He bubbled with laughter continually. The men, I thought, seemed a little embarrassed by his open-handed cordiality and good-fellowship. He himself evidently wanted to forget the present, and to live only in the memory of those wonderful ranch days, — that free, hardy, adventurous life upon the plains. It all came back to him with a rush when he found himself alone with these heroes of the rope and the stirrup. How much more keen his appreciation was, and how much quicker his memory, than theirs! He was constantly recalling to their minds incidents which they had forgotten, and the names of horses and dogs which had escaped them. His subsequent life, instead of making dim the memory of his ranch days, seemed to have made it more vivid by contrast.

When they had gone, I said to him, "I think your affection for those men very beautiful."

"How could I help it?" he said.

"Still, few men in your station could or would go back and renew such friendships."

"Then I pity them," he replied.

RANCH LIFE THE MAKING OF HIM

He said afterwards that his ranch life had been the making of him. It had built him up and hardened him physically, and it had opened his eyes to

the wealth of manly character among the plainsmen and cattlemen.

Had he not gone West, he said, he never would have raised the Rough Riders Regiment; and had he not raised that regiment and gone to the Cuban War, he would not have been made governor of New York; and had not this happened, the politicians would not unwittingly have made his rise to the Presidency so inevitable. There is no doubt, I think, that he would have got there some day; but without the chain of events above outlined, his rise could not have been so rapid.

Our train entered the Bad Lands of North Dakota in the early evening twilight, and the President stood on the rear platform of his car, gazing wistfully upon the scene. "I know all this country like a book," he said. "I have ridden over it, and hunted over it, and tramped over it, in all seasons and weather, and it looks like home to me. My old ranch is not far off. We shall soon reach Medora, which was my station." It was plain to see that that strange, forbidding-looking landscape, hills and valleys to Eastern eyes utterly demoralized and gone to the bad, — flayed, fantastic, treeless, a riot of naked clay slopes, chimney-like buttes, and dry coulees, — was in his eyes a land of almost pathetic interest. There were streaks of good pasturage here and there where his cattle used to graze, and where the deer and the pronghorn used to linger.

When we reached Medora, where the train was scheduled to stop an hour, it was nearly dark, but the whole town and country round had turned out to welcome their old townsman. After much handshaking, the committee conducted us down to a little hall, where the President stood on a low platform, and made a short address to the standing crowd that filled the place. Then some flashlight pictures were taken by the local photographer, after which the President stepped down, and, while the people filed past him, shook hands with every man, woman, and child of them, calling many of them by name, and greeting them all most cordially. I recall one grizzled old frontiersman whose hand he grasped, calling him by name, and saying, "How well I remember you! You once mended my gun-lock for me, — put on a new hammer." "Yes," said the delighted old fellow; "I'm the man, Mr. President." He was among his old neighbors once more, and the pleasure of the meeting was very obvious on both sides. I heard one of the women tell him they were going to have a dance presently, and ask him if he would not stay and open it! The President laughingly excused himself, and said his train had to leave on schedule time, and his time was nearly up. I thought of the incident in his "Ranch Life," in which he says he once opened a cowboy

ball with the wife of a Minnesota man, who had recently shot a bullying Scotchman who danced opposite. He says the scene reminded him of the ball where Bret Harte's heroine "went down the middle with the man that shot Sandy Magee."

Before reaching Medora he had told me many anecdotes of "Hell Roaring Bill Jones," and had said I should see him. But it turned out that Hell Roaring Bill had begun to celebrate the coming of the President too early in the day, and when we reached Medora he was not in a presentable condition. I forget now how he had earned his name, but no doubt he had come honestly by it; it was a part of his history, as was that of "The Pike," "Cold Turkey Bill," "Hash Knife Joe," and other classic heroes of the frontier.

BAD LANDS AND BAD MEN

It is curious how certain things go to the bad in the Far West, or a certain proportion of them, — bad lands, bad horses, and bad men. And it is a degree of badness that the East has no conception of, — land that looks as raw and unnatural as if time had never laid its shaping and softening hand upon it; horses that, when mounted, put their heads to the ground and their heels in the air, and, squealing defiantly, resort to the most diabolically ingenious tricks to shake off or to kill their riders; and men who amuse themselves in bar-rooms by shoot-

ing about the feet of a "tenderfoot" to make him dance, or who ride along the street and shoot at every one in sight. Just as the old plutonic fires come to the surface out there in the Rockies, and hint very strongly of the infernal regions, so a kind of satanic element in men and animals — an underlying devilishness — crops out, and we have the border ruffian and the bucking broncho.

The President told of an Englishman on a hunting trip in the West, who, being an expert horseman at home, scorned the idea that he could not ride any of their "grass-fed ponies." So they gave him a bucking broncho. He was soon lying on the ground, much stunned. When he could speak, he said, "I should not have minded him, you know, *but 'e 'ides 'is 'ead.*"

THE PRESIDENT'S CORDIALITY

At one place in Dakota the train stopped to take water while we were at lunch. A crowd soon gathered, and the President went out to greet them. We could hear his voice, and the cheers and laughter of the crowd. And then we heard him say, "Well, good-by, I must go now." Still he did not come. Then we heard more talking and laughing, and another "good-by," and yet he did not come. Then I went out to see what had happened. I found the President down on the ground shaking hands with the whole lot of them. Some one had reached up to

shake his hand as he was about withdrawing, and this had been followed by such eagerness on the part of the rest of the people to do likewise, that the President had instantly got down to gratify them. Had the secret service men known it, they would have been in a pickle. We probably have never had a President who responded more freely and heartily to the popular liking for him than Roosevelt. The crowd always seem to be in love with him the moment they see him and hear his voice. And it is not by reason of any arts of eloquence, or charm of address, but by reason of his inborn heartiness and sincerity, and his genuine manliness. The people feel his quality at once. In Bermuda last winter I met a Catholic priest who had sat on the platform at some place in New England very near the President while he was speaking, and who said, "The man had not spoken three minutes before I loved him, and had any one tried to molest him, I could have torn him to pieces." It is the quality in the man that instantly inspires such a liking as this in strangers that will, I am sure, safeguard him in all public places.

I once heard him say that he did not like to be addressed as "His Excellency;" he added laughingly, "They might just as well call me His Transparency, for all I care." It is this transparency, this direct, out-and-out, unequivocal character of him that is one source of his popularity. The people do love transparency,—all of them but the politicians.

A friend of his one day took him to task for some mistake he had made in one of his appointments. "My dear sir," replied the President, "where you know of one mistake I have made, I know of ten." How such candor must make the politicians shiver!

THE MULE-TEAM

I have said that I stood in dread of the necessity of snowshoeing in the Park, and, in lieu of that, of horseback riding. Yet when we reached Gardiner, the entrance to the Park, on that bright, crisp April morning, with no snow in sight save that on the mountain-tops, and found Major Pitcher and Captain Chittenden at the head of a squad of soldiers, with a fine saddle-horse for the President, and an ambulance drawn by two span of mules for me, I confess that I experienced just a slight shade of mortification. I thought they might have given me the option of the saddle or the ambulance. Yet I entered the vehicle as if it was just what I had been expecting.

The President and his escort, with a cloud of cowboys hovering in the rear, were soon off at a lively pace, and my ambulance followed close, and at a lively pace, too; so lively that I soon found myself gripping the seat with my hands. "Well," I said to myself, "they are giving me a regular Western send-off;" and I thought, as the ambulance swayed from side to side, that it would suit me just

as well if my driver did not try to keep up with the presidential procession. The driver and his mules were shut off from me by a curtain, but, looking ahead out of the sides of the vehicle, I saw two good-sized logs lying across our course. Surely, I thought (and barely had time to think), he will avoid these. But he did not, and as we passed over them I was nearly thrown through the top of the ambulance. "This *is* a lively send-off," I said, rubbing my bruises with one hand, while I clung to the seat with the other. Presently I saw the cowboys scrambling up the bank as if to get out of our way; then the President on his fine gray stallion scrambling up the bank with his escort, and looking ominously in my direction, as we thundered by.

SIDETRACKING THE PRESIDENT

"Well," I said, "this is indeed a novel ride; for once in my life I have sidetracked the President of the United States! I am given the right of way over all." On we tore, along the smooth, hard road, and did not slacken our pace till, at the end of a mile or two, we began to mount the hill toward Fort Yellowstone. And not till we reached the fort did I learn that our mules had run away. They had been excited beyond control by the presidential cavalcade, and the driver, finding he could not hold them, had aimed only to keep them in the road, and we very soon had the road all to ourselves.

Fort Yellowstone is at Mammoth Hot Springs, where one gets his first view of the characteristic scenery of the Park, — huge, boiling springs with their columns of vapor, and the first characteristic odors which suggest the traditional infernal regions quite as much as the boiling and steaming water does. One also gets a taste of a much more rarefied air than he has been used to, and finds himself panting for breath on a very slight exertion. The Mammoth Hot Springs have built themselves up an enormous mound that stands there above the village on the side of the mountain, terraced and scalloped and fluted, and suggesting some vitreous formation, or rare carving of enormous, many-colored precious stones. It looks quite unearthly, and, though the devil's frying pan, and ink pot, and the Stygian caves are not far off, the suggestion is of something celestial rather than of the nether regions, — a vision of jasper walls, and of amethyst battlements.

With Captain Chittenden I climbed to the top, stepping over the rills and creeks of steaming hot water, and looked at the marvelously clear, cerulean, but boiling, pools on the summit. The water seemed as unearthly in its beauty and purity as the gigantic sculpturing that held it.

FORT YELLOWSTONE.

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THE STYGIAN CAVES

The Stygian caves are still farther up the mountain, — little pockets in the rocks, or well-holes in the ground at your feet, filled with deadly carbon dioxide. We saw birds' feathers and quills in all of them. The birds hop into them, probably in quest of food or seeking shelter, and they never come out. We saw the body of a martin on the bank of one hole. Into one we sank a lighted torch, and it was extinguished as quickly as if we had dropped it into water. Each cave or niche is a death valley on a small scale. Near by we came upon a steaming pool, or lakelet, of an acre or more in extent. A pair of mallard ducks were swimming about in one end of it, — the cool end. When we approached, they swam slowly over into the warmer water. As they progressed, the water got hotter and hotter, and the ducks' discomfort was evident. Presently they stopped, and turned toward us, half appealingly, as I thought. They could go no farther; would we please come no nearer? As I took another step or two, up they rose and disappeared over the hill. Had they gone to the extreme end of the pool, we could have had boiled mallard for dinner.

DEER FEEDING IN THE STREETS

Another novel spectacle was at night, or near sundown, when the deer came down from the hills

into the streets, and ate hay a few yards from the officers' quarters, as unconcernedly as so many domestic sheep. This they had been doing all winter, and they kept it up till May, at times a score or more of them profiting thus on the government's bounty. When the sundown gun was fired a couple of hundred yards away, they gave a nervous start, but kept on with their feeding. The antelope and elk and mountain sheep had not yet grown bold enough to accept Uncle Sam's charity in that way.

The President wanted all the freedom and solitude possible while in the Park, so all newspaper men and other strangers were excluded. Even the secret service men and his physician and private secretaries were left at Gardiner. He craved once more to be alone with nature; he was evidently hungry for the wild and the aboriginal, — a hunger that seems to come upon him regularly at least once a year, and drives him forth on his hunting trips for big game in the West.

We spent two weeks in the Park, and had fair weather, bright, crisp days, and clear, freezing nights. The first week we occupied three camps that had been prepared, or partly prepared, for us in the northeast corner of the Park, in the region drained by the Gardiner River, where there was but little snow, and which we reached on horseback.

VISIT TO THE GEYSER REGION

The second week we visited the geyser region, which lies a thousand feet or more higher, and where the snow was still five or six feet deep. This part of the journey was made in big sleighs, each drawn by two span of horses.

On the horseback excursion, which involved only about fifty miles of riding, we had a mule pack train, and Sibley tents and stoves, with quite a retinue of camp laborers, a lieutenant and an orderly or two, and a guide, Billy Hofer.

THE FIRST CAMP

The first camp was in a wild, rocky, and picturesque gorge on the Yellowstone, about ten miles from the fort. A slight indisposition, the result of luxurious living, with no wood to chop or to saw, and no hills to climb, as at home, prevented me from joining the party till the third day. Then Captain Chittenden drove me eight miles in a buggy. About two miles from camp we came to a picket of two or three soldiers, where my big bay was in waiting for me. I mounted him confidently, and, guided by an orderly, took the narrow, winding trail toward camp. Except for an hour's riding the day before with Captain Chittenden, I had not been on a horse's back for nearly fifty years, and I had not spent as much as a day in the saddle during my

youth. That first sense of a live, spirited, powerful animal beneath you, at whose mercy you are, — you, a pedestrian all your days, — with gullies and rocks and logs to cross, and deep chasms opening close beside you, is not a little disturbing. But my big bay did his part well, and I did not lose my head or my nerve, as we cautiously made our way along the narrow path on the side of the steep gorge, with a foaming torrent rushing along at its foot, nor yet when we forded the rocky and rapid Yellowstone. A misstep or a stumble on the part of my steed, and probably the first bubble of my confidence would have been shivered at once; but this did not happen, and in due time we reached the group of tents that formed the President's camp.

THE PRESIDENT ALONE IN THE WILDERNESS

The situation was delightful, — no snow, scattered pine trees, a secluded valley, rocky heights, and the clear, ample, trouty waters of the Yellowstone. The President was not in camp. In the morning he had stated his wish to go alone into the wilderness. Major Pitcher very naturally did not quite like the idea, and wished to send an orderly with him.

"No," said the President. "Put me up a lunch, and let me go alone. I will surely come back."

And back he surely came. It was about five o'clock when he came briskly down the path from the east to the camp. It came out that he had

tramped about eighteen miles through a very rough country. The day before, he and the major had located a band of several hundred elk on a broad, treeless hillside, and his purpose was to find those elk, and creep up on them, and eat his lunch under their very noses. And this he did, spending an hour or more within fifty yards of them. He came back looking as fresh as when he started, and at night, sitting before the big camp fire, related his adventure, and talked with his usual emphasis and copiousness of many things. He told me of the birds he had seen or heard; among them he had heard one that was new to him. From his description I told him I thought it was Townsend's solitaire, a bird I much wanted to see and hear. I had heard the West India solitaire, — one of the most impressive songsters I ever heard, — and I wished to compare our Western form with it.

A STRANGE BIRD SONG

The next morning we set out for our second camp, ten or a dozen miles away, and in reaching it passed over much of the ground the President had traversed the day before. As we came to a wild, rocky place above a deep chasm of the river, with a few scattered pine trees, the President said, "It was right here that I heard that strange bird song." We paused a moment. "And there it is now," he exclaimed.

Sure enough, there was the solitaire singing from the top of a small cedar, — a bright, animated, eloquent song, but without the richness and magic of the song of the tropical species. We hitched our horses, and followed the bird up as it flew from tree to tree. The President was as eager to see and hear it as I was. It seemed very shy, and we only caught glimpses of it. In form and color it much resembles its West India cousin, and suggests our catbird. It ceased to sing when we pursued it. It is a bird found only in the wilder and higher parts of the Rockies. My impression was that its song did not quite merit the encomiums that have been pronounced upon it.

At this point, I saw amid the rocks my first and only Rocky Mountain woodchucks, and, soon after we had resumed our journey, our first blue grouse, — a number of them like larger partridges. Occasionally we would come upon black-tailed deer, standing or lying down in the bushes, their large ears at attention being the first thing to catch the eye. They would often allow us to pass within a few rods of them without showing alarm. Elk horns were scattered all over this part of the Park, and we passed several old carcasses of dead elk that had probably died a natural death.

THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER AND CANYON.

From stereograph, copyright 1904, by Underwood & Underwood, New York.

In a grassy bottom at the foot of a steep hill, while the President and I were dismounted, and noting the pleasing picture which our pack train of fifteen or twenty mules made filing along the side of a steep grassy slope, — a picture which he has preserved in his late volume, "Out-Door Pastimes of an American Hunter," — our attention was attracted by plaintive, musical, bird-like chirps that rose from the grass about us. I was almost certain it was made by a bird; the President was of like opinion; and I kicked about in the tufts of grass, hoping to flush the bird. Now here, now there, arose this sharp, but bird-like note. Finally we found that it was made by a species of gopher, whose holes we soon discovered. What its specific name is I do not know, but it should be called the singing gopher.

Our destination this day was a camp on Cottonwood Creek, near "Hell Roaring Creek." As we made our way in the afternoon along a broad, open, grassy valley, I saw a horseman come galloping over the hill to our right, starting up a band of elk as he came; riding across the plain, he wheeled his horse, and, with the military salute, joined our party. He proved to be a government scout, called the "Duke of Hell Roaring," — an educated officer from the Austrian army, who, for some unknown reason, had exiled himself here in this out-of-the-

way part of the world. He was a man in his prime, of fine, military look and bearing. After conversing a few moments with the President and Major Pitcher, he rode rapidly away.

THE SECOND CAMP

Our second camp, which we reached in mid-afternoon, was in the edge of the woods on the banks of a fine, large trout stream, where ice and snow still lingered in patches. I tried for trout in the head of a large, partly open pool, but did not get a rise; too much ice in the stream, I concluded. Very soon my attention was attracted by a strange note, or call, in the spruce woods. The President had also noticed it, and, with me, wondered what made it. Was it bird or beast? Billy Hofer said he thought it was an owl, but it in no way suggested an owl, and the sun was shining brightly. It was a sound such as a boy might make by blowing in the neck of an empty bottle. Presently we heard it beyond us on the other side of the creek, which was pretty good proof that the creature had wings.

"Let's go run that bird down," said the President to me.

So off we started across a small, open, snow-streaked plain, toward the woods beyond it. We soon decided that the bird was on the top of one of a group of tall spruces. After much skipping about over logs and rocks, and much craning of our necks,

we made him out on the peak of a spruce. I imitated his call, when he turned his head down toward us, but we could not make out what he was.

"Why did we not think to bring the glasses?" said the President.

"I will run and get them," I replied.

"No," said he, "you stay here and keep that bird treed, and I will fetch them."

So off he went like a boy, and was very soon back with the glasses. We quickly made out that it was indeed an owl, — the pigmy owl, as it turned out, — not much larger than a bluebird. I think the President was as pleased as if we had bagged some big game. He had never seen the bird before.

Throughout the trip I found his interest in bird life very keen, and his eye and ear remarkably quick. He usually saw the bird or heard its note as quickly as I did, — and I had nothing else to think about, and had been teaching my eye and ear the trick of it for over fifty years. Of course, his training as a big-game hunter stood him in good stead, but back of that were his naturalist's instincts, and his genuine love of all forms of wild life.

I have been told that his ambition up to the time he went to Harvard had been to be a naturalist, but

that there they seem to have convinced him that all the out-of-door worlds of natural history had been conquered, and that the only worlds remaining were in the laboratory, and to be won with the microscope and the scalpel. But Roosevelt was a man made for action in a wide field, and laboratory conquests could not satisfy him. His instincts as a naturalist, however, lie back of all his hunting expeditions, and, in a large measure, I think, prompt them. Certain it is that his hunting records contain more live natural history than any similar records known to me, unless it be those of Charles St. John, the Scotch naturalist-sportsman.

The Canada jays, or camp-robbers, as they are often called, soon found out our camp that afternoon, and no sooner had the cook begun to throw out peelings and scraps and crusts than the jays began to carry them off, not to eat, as I observed, but to hide them in the thicker branches of the spruce trees. How tame they were, coming within three or four yards of one! Why this species of jay should everywhere be so familiar, and all other kinds so wild, is a puzzle.

In the morning, as we rode down the valley toward our next camping-place, at Tower Falls, a band of elk containing a hundred or more started along the side of the hill a few hundred yards away. I was some distance behind the rest of the party, as usual, when I saw the President wheel his horse

off to the left, and, beckoning to me to follow, start at a tearing pace on the trail of the fleeing elk. He afterwards told me that he wanted me to get a good view of those elk at close range, and he was afraid that if he sent the major or Hofer to lead me, I would not get it. I hurried along as fast as I could, which was not fast; the way was rough, — logs, rocks, spring runs, and a tenderfoot rider.

Now and then the President, looking back and seeing what slow progress I was making, would beckon to me impatiently, and I could fancy him saying, "If I had a rope around him, he would come faster than that!" Once or twice I lost sight of both him and the elk; the altitude was great, and the horse was laboring like a steam-engine on an up-grade. Still I urged him on. Presently, as I broke over a hill, I saw the President pressing the elk up the opposite slope. At the brow of the hill he stopped, and I soon joined him. There on the top, not fifty yards away, stood the elk in a mass, their heads toward us and their tongues hanging out. They could run no farther. The President laughed like a boy. The spectacle meant much more to him than it did to me. I had never seen a wild elk till on this trip, but they had been among the notable game that he had hunted. He had traveled hundreds of miles, and undergone great hardships, to get within

rifle range of these creatures. Now here stood scores of them, with lolling tongues, begging for mercy.

After gazing at them to our hearts' content, we turned away to look up our companions, who were nowhere within sight. We finally spied them a mile or more away, and, joining them, all made our way to an elevated plateau that commanded an open landscape three or four miles across. It was high noon, and the sun shone clear and warm. From this lookout we saw herds upon herds of elk scattered over the slopes and gentle valleys in front of us. Some were grazing, some were standing or lying upon the ground, or upon the patches of snow. Through our glasses we counted the separate bands, and then the numbers of some of the bands or groups, and estimated that three thousand elk were in full view in the landscape around us. It was a notable spectacle. Afterward, in Montana, I attended a council of Indian chiefs at one of the Indian agencies, and told them, through their interpreter, that I had been with the Great Chief in the Park, and of the game we had seen. When I told them of these three thousand elk all in view at once, they grunted loudly, whether with satisfaction or with incredulity, I could not tell.

In the midst of this great game amphitheatre we dismounted and enjoyed the prospect. And the President did an unusual thing, he loafed for nearly an hour,—stretched himself out in the sunshine upon

a flat rock, as did the rest of us, and, I hope, got a few winks of sleep. I am sure I did. Little, slender, striped chipmunks, about half the size of ours, were scurrying about; but I recall no other wild thing save the elk.

TOWER FALLS

From here we rode down the valley to our third camp, at Tower Falls, stopping on the way to eat our luncheon on a washed boulder beside a creek. On this ride I saw my first and only badger; he stuck his striped head out of his hole in the ground only a few yards away from us as we passed.

Our camp at Tower Falls was amid the spruces above a cañon of the Yellowstone, five or six hundred feet deep. It was a beautiful and impressive situation, — shelter, snugness, even cosiness, — looking over the brink of the awful and the terrifying. With a run and a jump I think one might have landed in the river at the bottom of the great abyss, and in doing so might have scaled one of those natural obelisks or needles of rock that stand up out of the depths two or three hundred feet high. Nature shows you what an enormous furrow her plough can open through the strata when mowing horizontally, at the same time that she shows you what delicate and graceful columns her slower and gentler aerial forces can carve out of the piled strata. At the Falls there were two or three of these columns, like the picket-pins of the elder gods.

Across the cañon in front of our camp, upon a grassy plateau which was faced by a wall of trap rock, apparently thirty or forty feet high, a band of mountain sheep soon attracted our attention. They were within long rifle range, but were not at all disturbed by our presence, nor had they been disturbed by the road-builders who, under Captain Chittenden, were constructing a government road along the brink of the cañon. We speculated as to whether or not the sheep could get down the almost perpendicular face of the chasm to the river to drink. It seemed to me impossible. Would they try it while we were there to see? We all hoped so; and sure enough, late in the afternoon the word came to our tents that the sheep were coming down. The President, with coat off and a towel around his neck, was shaving. One side of his face was half shaved, and the other side lathered. Hofer and I started for a point on the brink of the cañon where we could have a better view.

"By Jove," said the President, "I must see that. The shaving can wait, and the sheep won't."

So on he came, accoutred as he was, — coatless, hatless, but not latherless, nor towelless. Like the rest of us, his only thought was to see those sheep

MR. BURROUGHS'S FAVORITE PASTIME.

By kind permission of Forest and Stream.

do their "stunt." With glasses in hand, we watched them descend those perilous heights, leaping from point to point, finding a foothold where none appeared to our eyes, loosening fragments of the crumbling rocks as they came, now poised upon some narrow shelf and preparing for the next leap, zigzagging or plunging straight down till the bottom was reached, and not one accident or misstep amid all that insecure footing. I think the President was the most pleased of us all; he laughed with the delight of it, and quite forgot his need of a hat and coat till I sent for them.

In the night we heard the sheep going back; we could tell by the noise of the falling stones. In the morning I confidently expected to see some of them lying dead at the foot of the cliffs, but there they all were at the top once more, apparently safe and sound. They do, however, occasionally meet with accidents in their perilous climbing, and their dead bodies have been found at the foot of the rocks. Doubtless some point of rock to which they had trusted gave way, and crushed them in the descent, or fell upon those in the lead.

TROUT FISHING

The next day, while the rest of us went fishing for trout in the Yellowstone, three or four miles above camp, over the roughest trail that we had yet traversed on horseback, the President, who never

fishes unless put to it for meat, went off alone again with his lunch in his pocket, to stalk those sheep as he had stalked the elk, and to feel the old sportsman's thrill without the use of firearms. To do this involved a tramp of eight or ten miles down the river to a bridge and up the opposite bank. This he did, and ate his lunch near the sheep, and was back in camp before we were.

We took some large cut-throat trout, as they are called, from the yellow mark across their throats, and I saw at short range a black-tailed deer bounding along in that curious, stiff-legged, mechanical, yet springy manner, apparently all four legs in the air at once, and all four feet reaching the ground at once, affording a very singular spectacle.

RETURN TO FORT YELLOWSTONE

We spent two nights in our Tower Falls camp, and on the morning of the third day set out on our return to Fort Yellowstone, pausing at Yancey's on our way, and exchanging greetings with the old frontiersman, who died a few weeks later.

AROUND THE CAMP FIRE

While in camp we always had a big fire at night in the open near the tents, and around this we sat upon logs or camp-stools, and listened to the President's talk. What a stream of it he poured forth! and what a varied and picturesque stream!

— anecdote, history, science, politics, adventure, literature; bits of his experience as a ranchman, hunter, Rough Rider, legislator, Civil Service commissioner, police commissioner, governor, president, — the frankest confessions, the most telling criticisms, happy characterizations of prominent political leaders, or foreign rulers, or members of his own Cabinet; always surprising by his candor, astonishing by his memory, and diverting by his humor. His reading has been very wide, and he has that rare type of memory which retains details as well as mass and generalities. One night something started him off on ancient history, and one would have thought he was just fresh from his college course in history, the dates and names and events came so readily. Another time he discussed palæontology, and rapidly gave the outlines of the science, and the main facts, as if he had been reading up on the subject that very day. He sees things as wholes, and hence the relation of the parts comes easy to him.

At dinner, at the White House, the night before we started on the expedition, I heard him talking with a guest, — an officer of the British army, who was just back from India. And the extent and variety of his information about India and Indian history and the relations of the British government to it were extraordinary. It put the British major on his mettle to keep pace with him.

One night in camp he told us the story of one of his Rough Riders who had just written him from some place in Arizona. The Rough Riders, wherever they are now, look to him in time of trouble. This one had come to grief in Arizona. He was in jail. So he wrote the President, and his letter ran something like this: —

"DEAR COLONEL, — I am in trouble. I shot a lady in the eye, but I did not intend to hit the lady; I was shooting at my wife."

And the presidential laughter rang out over the treetops. To another Rough Rider, who was in jail, accused of horse stealing, he had loaned two hundred dollars to pay counsel on his trial, and, to his surprise, in due time the money came back. The Ex-Rough wrote that his trial never came off. "*We elected our district attorney;*" and the laughter again sounded, and drowned the noise of the brook near by.

On another occasion we asked the President if he was ever molested by any of the "bad men" of the frontier, with whom he had often come in contact. "Only once," he said. The cowboys had always treated him with the utmost courtesy, both on the round-up and in camp; "and the few real desperadoes I have seen were also perfectly polite." Once only was he maliciously shot at, and then not by a cowboy nor a *bona fide* "bad man," but by a

"broad-hatted ruffian of a cheap and commonplace type." He had been compelled to pass the night at a little frontier hotel where the bar-room occupied the whole lower floor, and was, in consequence, the only place where the guests of the hotel, whether drunk or sober, could sit. As he entered the room, he saw that every man there was being terrorized by a half-drunken ruffian who stood in the middle of the floor with a revolver in each hand, compelling different ones to treat.

FLOORING A RUFFIAN

"I went and sat down behind the stove," said the President, "as far from him as I could get; and hoped to escape his notice. The fact that I wore glasses, together with my evident desire to avoid a fight, apparently gave him the impression that I could be imposed upon with impunity. He very soon approached me, flourishing his two guns, and ordered me to treat. I made no reply for some moments, when the fellow became so threatening that I saw something had to be done. The crowd, mostly sheep-herders and small grangers, sat or stood back against the wall, afraid to move. I was unarmed, and thought rapidly. Saying, 'Well, if I must, I must,' I got up as if to walk around him to the bar, then, as I got opposite him, I wheeled and fetched him as heavy a blow on the chin-point as I could strike. He went down like a steer before the

axe, firing both guns into the ceiling as he went. I jumped on him, and, with my knees on his chest, disarmed him in a hurry. The crowd was then ready enough to help me, and we hog-tied him and put him in an outhouse." The President alludes to this incident in his "Ranch Life," but does not give the details. It brings out his mettle very distinctly.

He told us in an amused way of the attempts of his political opponents at Albany, during his early career as a member of the Assembly, to besmirch his character. His outspoken criticisms and denunciations had become intolerable to them, so they laid a trap for him, but he was not caught. His innate rectitude and instinct for the right course saved him, as it has saved him many times since. I do not think that in any emergency he has to debate with himself long as to the right course to be pursued; he divines it by a kind of infallible instinct. His motives are so simple and direct that he finds a straight and easy course where another man, whose eye is less single, would flounder and hesitate.

RARE COMBINATION OF QUALITIES

The President unites in himself powers and qualities that rarely go together. Thus, he has both physical and moral courage in a degree rare in history. He can stand calm and unflinching in the path of a charging grizzly, and he can confront with equal

coolness and determination the predaceous corporations and money powers of the country.

He unites the qualities of the man of action with those of the scholar and writer, — another very rare combination. He unites the instincts and accomplishments of the best breeding and culture with the broadest democratic sympathies and affiliations. He is as happy with a frontiersman like Seth Bullock as with a fellow Harvard man, and Seth Bullock is happy, too.

He unites great austerity with great good-nature. He unites great sensibility with great force and will power. He loves solitude, and he loves to be in the thick of the fight. His love of nature is equaled only by his love of the ways and marts of men.

He is doubtless the most vital man on the continent, if not on the planet, to-day. He is many-sided, and every side throbs with his tremendous life and energy; the pressure is equal all around. His interests are as keen in natural history as in economics, in literature as in statecraft, in the young poet as in the old soldier, in preserving peace as in preparing for war. And he can turn all his great power into the new channel on the instant. His interest in the whole of life, and in the whole life of the nation, never flags for a moment. His activity is tireless. All the relaxation he needs or craves is a change of work. He is like the farmer's fields, that only need a rotation of crops. I once heard him say that all

he cared about being President was just "the big work."

During this tour through the West, lasting over two months, he made nearly three hundred speeches; and yet on his return Mrs. Roosevelt told me he looked as fresh and unworn as when he left home.

SLEIGHING AMONG THE GEYSERS

We went up into the big geyser region with the big sleighs, each drawn by four horses. A big snow-bank had to be shoveled through for us before we got to the Golden Gate, two miles above Mammoth Hot Springs. Beyond that we were at an altitude of about eight thousand feet, on a fairly level course that led now through woods, and now through open country, with the snow of a uniform depth of four or five feet, except as we neared the "formations," where the subterranean warmth kept the ground bare. The roads had been broken and the snow packed for us by teams from the fort, otherwise the journey would have been impossible.

The President always rode beside the driver. From his youth, he said, this seat had always been the most desirable one to him. When the sleigh would strike the bare ground, and begin to drag heavily, he would bound out nimbly and take to his heels, and then all three of us — Major Pitcher, Mr. Childs, and myself — would follow suit, sometimes reluctantly on my part. Walking at that

SUNRISE IN YELLOWSTONE PARK.

From stereograph, copyright 1904, by Underwood & Underwood, New York.

altitude is no fun, especially if you try to keep pace with such a walker as the President is. But he could not sit at his ease and let those horses drag him in a sleigh over bare ground. When snow was reached, we would again quickly resume our seats.

As one nears the geyser region, he gets the impression from the columns of steam going up here and there in the distance — now from behind a piece of woods, now from out a hidden valley — that he is approaching a manufacturing centre, or a railroad terminus. And when he begins to hear the hoarse snoring of "Roaring Mountain," the illusion is still more complete. At Norris's there is a big vent where the steam comes tearing out of a recent hole in the ground with terrific force. Huge mounds of ice had formed from the congealed vapor all around it, some of them very striking.

OLD FAITHFUL

The novelty of the geyser region soon wears off. Steam and hot water are steam and hot water the world over, and the exhibition of them here did not differ, except in volume, from what one sees by his own fireside. The "Growler" is only a boiling tea-kettle on a large scale, and "Old Faithful" is as if the lid were to fly off, and the whole contents of the kettle should be thrown high into the air. To be sure, boiling lakes and steaming rivers are not common, but the new features seemed, somehow, out

of place, and as if nature had made a mistake. One disliked to see so much good steam and hot water going to waste; whole towns might be warmed by them, and big wheels made to go round. I wondered that they had not piped them into the big hotels which they opened for us, and which were warmed by wood fires.

At Norris's the big room that the President and I occupied was on the ground floor, and was heated by a huge box stove. As we entered it to go to bed, the President said, "Oom John, don't you think it is too hot here?"

"I certainly do," I replied.

"Shall I open the window?"

"That will just suit me." And he threw the sash, which came down to the floor, all the way up, making an opening like a doorway. The night was cold, but neither of us suffered from the abundance of fresh air.

The caretaker of the building was a big Swede called Andy. In the morning Andy said that beat him: "There was the President of the United States sleeping in that room, with the window open to the floor, and not so much as one soldier outside on guard."

The President had counted much on seeing the bears that in summer board at the Fountain Hotel, but they were not yet out of their dens. We saw the track of only one, and he was not making for the

hotel. At all the formations where the geysers are, the ground was bare over a large area. I even saw a wild flower — an early buttercup, not an inch high — in bloom. This seems to be the earliest wild flower in the Rockies. It is the only fragrant buttercup I know.

CAPTURING A MOUSE

As we were riding along in our big sleigh toward the Fountain Hotel, the President suddenly jumped out, and, with his soft hat as a shield to his hand, captured a mouse that was running along over the ground near us. He wanted it for Dr. Merriam, on the chance that it might be a new species. While we all went fishing in the afternoon, the President skinned his mouse, and prepared the pelt to be sent to Washington. It was done as neatly as a professed taxidermist would have done it. This was the only game the President killed in the Park. In relating the incident to a reporter while I was in Spokane, the thought occurred to me, Suppose he changes that *u* to an *o*, and makes the President capture a moose, what a pickle I shall be in! Is it anything more than ordinary newspaper enterprise to turn a mouse into a moose? But, luckily for me, no such metamorphosis happened to that little mouse. It turned out not to be a new species, as it should have been, but a species new to the Park.

I caught trout that afternoon, on the edge of

steaming pools in the Madison River, that seemed to my hand almost blood-warm. I suppose they found better feeding where the water was warm. On the table they did not compare with our Eastern brook trout.

I was pleased to be told at one of the hotels that they had kalsomined some of the rooms with material from one of the devil's paint-pots. It imparted a soft, delicate, pinkish tint, not at all suggestive of things satanic.

THE MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD

One afternoon at Norris's, the President and I took a walk to observe the birds. In the grove about the barns there was a great number, the most attractive to me being the mountain bluebird. These birds we saw in all parts of the Park, and at Norris's there was an unusual number of them. How blue they were, — breast and all. In voice and manner they were almost identical with our bluebird. The Western purple finch was abundant here also, and juncos, and several kinds of sparrows, with an occasional Western robin. A pair of wild geese were feeding in the low, marshy ground not over one hundred yards from us, but when we tried to approach nearer they took wing. A few geese and ducks seem to winter in the Park.

The second morning at Norris's, one of our teamsters, George Marvin, suddenly dropped dead

from some heart affection, just as he had finished caring for his team. It was a great shock to us all. I never saw a better man with a team than he was. I had ridden on the seat beside him all the day previous. On one of the "formations" our teams had got mired in the soft, putty-like mud, and at one time it looked as if they could never extricate themselves, and I doubt if they could have, had it not been for the skill with which Marvin managed them. We started for the Grand Cañon up the Yellowstone that morning, and, in order to give myself a walk over the crisp snow in the clear, frosty air, I set out a little while in advance of the teams. As I did so, I saw the President, accompanied by one of the teamsters, walking hurriedly toward the barn to pay his last respects to the body of Marvin. After we had returned to Mammoth Hot Springs, he made inquiries for the young woman to whom he had been told that Marvin was engaged to be married. He looked her up, and sat a long time with her in her home, offering his sympathy, and speaking words of consolation. The act shows the depth and breadth of his humanity.

TRAVELING ON SKIS

At the Cañon Hotel the snow was very deep, and had become so soft from the warmth of the earth beneath, as well as from the sun above, that we could only reach the brink of the Cañon on skis.

The President and Major Pitcher had used skis before, but I had not, and, starting out without the customary pole, I soon came to grief. The snow gave way beneath me, and I was soon in an awkward predicament. The more I struggled, the lower my head and shoulders went, till only my heels, strapped to those long timbers, protruded above the snow. To reverse my position was impossible till some one came, and reached me the end of a pole, and pulled me upright. But I very soon got the hang of the things, and the President and I quickly left the superintendent behind. I think I could have passed the President, but my manners forbade. He was heavier than I was, and broke in more. When one of his feet would go down half a yard or more, I noted with admiration the skilled diplomacy he displayed in extricating it. The tendency of my skis was all the time to diverge, and each to go off at an acute angle to my main course, and I had constantly to be on the alert to check this tendency.

Paths had been shoveled for us along the brink of the Cañon, so that we got the usual views from the different points. The Cañon was nearly free from snow, and was a grand spectacle, by far the grandest to be seen in the Park. The President told us that once, when pressed for meat, while returning through here from one of his hunting trips, he had made his way down to the river that we saw rushing

along beneath us, and had caught some trout for dinner. Necessity alone could induce him to fish.

Across the head of the Falls there was a bridge of snow and ice, upon which we were told that the coyotes passed. As the season progressed, there would come a day when the bridge would not be safe. It would be interesting to know if the coyotes knew when this time arrived.

The only live thing we saw in the Cañon was an osprey perched upon a rock opposite us.

Near the falls of the Yellowstone, as at other places we had visited, a squad of soldiers had their winter quarters. The President always called on them, looked over the books they had to read, examined their housekeeping arrangements, and conversed freely with them.

In front of the hotel were some low hills separated by gentle valleys. At the President's suggestion, he and I raced on our skis down those inclines. We had only to stand up straight, and let gravity do the rest. As we were going swiftly down the side of one of the hills, I saw out of the corner of my eye the President taking a header into the snow. The snow had given way beneath him, and nothing could save him from taking the plunge. I don't know whether I called out, or only thought, something about the downfall of the administration. At any rate, the administration was down, and pretty well buried, but it was quickly on its feet again, shaking off the

snow with a boy's laughter. I kept straight on, and very soon the laugh was on me, for the treacherous snow sank beneath me, and I took a header, too.

"Who is laughing now, Oom John?" called out the President.

The spirit of the boy was in the air that day about the Cañon of the Yellowstone, and the biggest boy of us all was President Roosevelt.

HOMEWARD BOUND

The snow was getting so soft in the middle of the day that our return to the Mammoth Hot Springs could no longer be delayed. Accordingly, we were up in the morning, and ready to start on the home journey, a distance of twenty miles, by four o'clock. The snow bore up the horses well till mid-forenoon, when it began to give way beneath them. But by very careful management we pulled through without serious delay, and were back again at the house of Major Pitcher in time for luncheon, being the only outsiders who had ever made the tour of the Park so early in the season.

A few days later I bade good-by to the President, who went on his way to California, while I made a loop of travel to Spokane, and around through Idaho and Montana, and had glimpses of the great, optimistic, sunshiny West that I shall not soon forget.

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